



Conservation Tips

The source for the town's drinking water is groundwater which is fed by rainfall and snow melt. Because the source of the groundwater is variable, it is important that we use our water wisely to make sure we have a safe and adequate supply of drinking water and firefighting. Conservation is a key part of this effort and has the added benefit for the consumer in that it results in a lower water / sewer bill.

INDOORS

There are 3 areas in the home where you can reduce your water usage – the bathroom, the kitchen, and the laundry.



In the Bathroom:

- Bathrooms make up the largest water use in the home – usually greater than 50% of the water used in the home.
- Turn off the faucet when you are brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Taking a shower rather than a bath uses less water. Also take shorter showers.
- While not in the bathroom, where possible insulate your hot water pipes, this will help minimize the amount of water that gets used before it is warm enough to step into the shower.
- Toilets generally use the most water of any appliance in the home. They are also the most likely source of leaks.
 - If your toilet was constructed prior to 1982, it uses between 3.5 and 7 gallons per flush. A modern toilet will use 1.6 or 1.28 gallons were flush. Consider replacing your old toilet with a new one – the Water Department has a rebate program that will help offset the cost.
 - Toilets are most likely to be the source of a leak. Clearly if you hear the water running continuously you have a leak (giggling the handle is not the fix). Toilets can also leak water silently. The water that flushes the waste is help back by a rubber flap. If the flap doesn't

make a tight seal, water can slowly leak into the bowl and cause the fill mechanism to continuously (and silently) refill the tank. You can determine if you have a “silent” leak, put a drop of food coloring into the tank. Wait 10 or 15 minutes, and if you see the color showing up in the bowl, you’ll know you have a leak.

- Don’t use the toilet as a wastebasket.
- Replace the shower head with a WaterSense labelled shower head. Make sure your faucet has an aerator. An aerator slightly restricts the volume of water but provides the same pressure as a faucet without an aerator.



In the Kitchen:

- Use the dishwasher only when you have a full load of dishes.
- Don’t rinse food off the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher - scrape off food from dishes before putting in the dishwasher.
- If replacing your dishwasher, look for an Energy Star rated model.
- Use the dishwasher, if you have one. Washing dishes by hand can use up to 27 gallons of water compared to as little as 3 gallons in an Energy Star rated dishwasher.
- If you wash your dishes by hand don’t let the water run continuously. Put a stopper in the sink or use a dish pan.



In the Laundry:

- Wash only full loads of laundry and/or make sure the water level setting is set correctly for the size of the load.
- Consider replacing your old washing machine with a new one with an Energy Star rated machine. Some high efficiency clothes washers use 35 to 50% less water than standard machines. The Water Department has a rebate program that will help offset the cost.



OUTDOORS

Walpole every year has water restrictions in place from May 1st to September 30th in order to reduce the amount of water withdrawn during the summer months. Without these restrictions, summer water use could double the water use in the other months. This increased water use occurs during the same time when our groundwater levels are at their lowest as plants come out of their dormant phase and use much of the rainfall that we get during the summer. The outdoor water restrictions help the water department to be able to ensure that we have

adequate supply for drinking water and firefighting. Conservation efforts by individual water users can further help as well as reduce their water bill.

- Do not hose off your driveway or walkways – sweep them with a broom.
- When using a hose, use one with a spring loaded nozzle.
- Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles it's water. They can wash your vehicle with much less water than you can at home.
- If you are watering your trees, shrubs, and flower gardens, use a soaker hose or drip irrigation system.
- If you are using a lawn irrigation system:
 - o Have a rain sensor on your control unit to avoid watering when it rains.
 - o Don't water during the middle of the day, as much as 50% of the water will evaporate. Best time to water is early in the morning.
 - o Make sure you aren't watering the street, sidewalk, or driveway.
 - o MOST IMPORTANT – follow the May through September outside water restrictions. Lawn irrigation systems are the biggest non-essential water use practices.

GENERAL

If any faucet is dripping it needs to be fixed, a simple dripping faucet can use a surprising amount of water.

If you are on sewer, your sewer bill is based on the amount of water you use. Conserving water not only reduces your water bill, it also results in a smaller sewer bill.

Our water bills now show the water usage over the last 6 billing periods. If you see an unexplained increase in the amount of water used in the current usage period, you probably have a leak.

One way to see if you have a water leak, check your water meter before and after a period of time when no water was used (the longer the period of time the better). If you see that the meter has shown water passed through, you have a leak some where in your system. Below is an example of a water meter showing water use:

Flip open the cover on the meter. The before meter reading shows 042,590 cubic feet of water has passed through the meter



The after meter reading shows 042,591 cubic feet of water, or 1 cubic foot of water used (a cubic foot of water = 7.48 gallons).



As always, please contact the Walpole Water Department at 508-660-7307 with any questions or concerns.